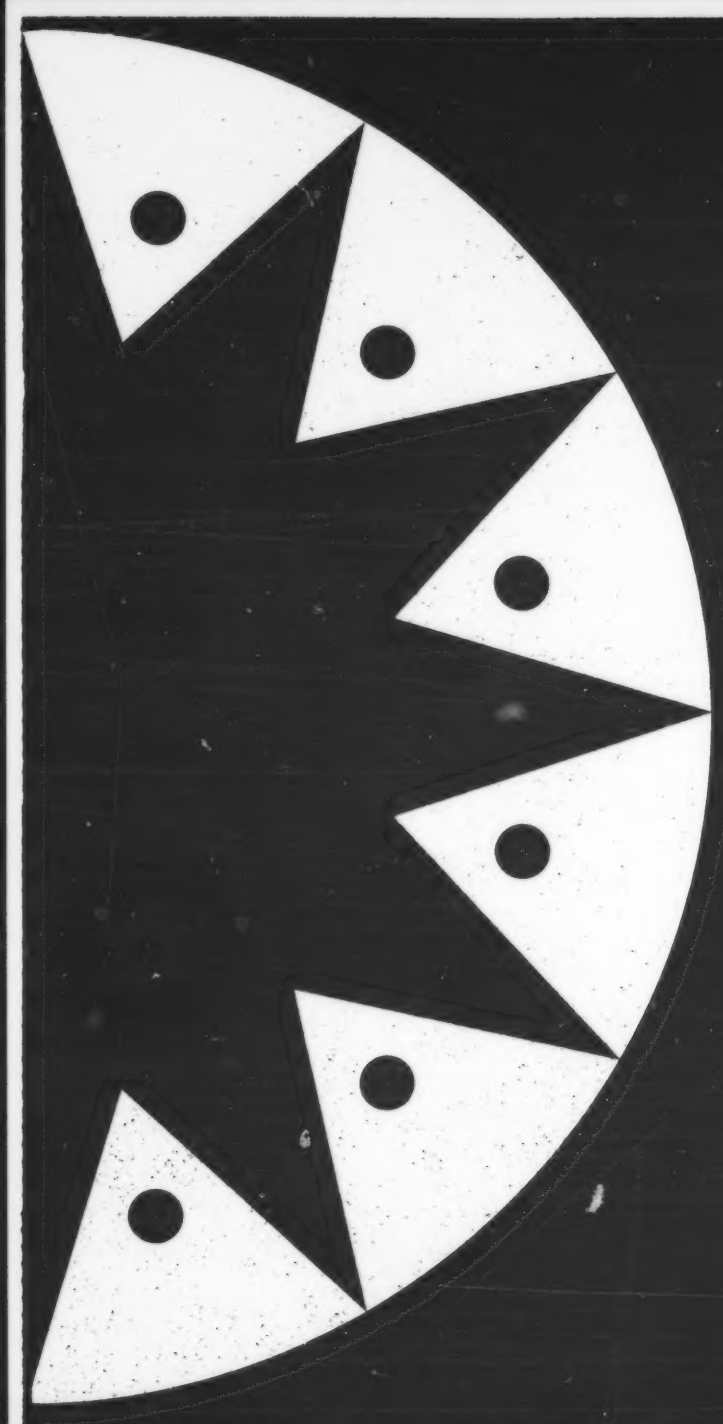

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY FOR ABORIGINAL WOMEN

Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association
Ontario Women's Directorate

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY FOR ABORIGINAL WOMEN

PUTTING SKILLS TO WORK

July 1991
Aussi disponible en français

92-02102/

ONTARIO WOMEN'S DIRECTORATE CHANGE AGENT PROGRAM

The Ontario Women's Directorate is a central advocacy agency within the Ontario Government. The Directorate works towards achieving social, economic and legal equality for women.

In 1986, the Ontario Women's Directorate launched a program designed to encourage the development of innovative employment equity projects. This program is called the Change Agent Program.

The program has two purposes:

1. to improve the employment status and representation of women in the workforce, and
2. to give examples of existing employment equity projects for employers and unions to consider when they are developing their own employment equity initiatives.

The Ontario Women's Directorate gives advice and financial support to organizations which work in partnership with the Directorate to implement employment equity programs. In return, participating organizations agree to share with other Ontario organizations the information they have gathered from their projects.

If you want more information on the Change Agent Program, please contact:

Consultative Services Branch
Ontario Women's Directorate
2nd Floor, 480 University Avenue
Toronto, Ontario
M5G 1V2
(416) 597-4500

ONTARIO METIS AND ABORIGINAL ASSOCIATION

The Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association (OMAA) is the representative association for Aboriginal people who live off-reserve in Ontario. It is a provincial organization with local associations across the Province. OMAA estimates that as many as 250,000 Aboriginal people live off-reserve in Ontario.

The Association's programs include:

- education and training opportunities for the off-reserve Aboriginal population;
- development of local organizations;
- public education regarding Aboriginal people, issues and concerns;
- economic and business development;
- housing assistance programs;
- research and development of self-government, land claims, the Aboriginal family and community well being.

ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

This publication highlights and celebrates the skills, achievements and potential that Aboriginal women bring to the workforce and to society.

The experiences and achievements of the six women profiled here will provide motivation and confidence to other Aboriginal women. We hope that women reading this book will be encouraged by the experiences related here to seek out their own opportunities. As well, the success of the women profiled demonstrates how employers benefit by hiring Aboriginal women.

The reality is that many Aboriginal women confront barriers to equal employment. After the profiles, the publication also gives tips for both Aboriginal women and employers. These tips can help women in their career development. The tips can also help employers achieve results through employment equity.

Finally, a list of resources is included. The resources, like the tips, will help both Aboriginal women and employers make employment equity work.

The publication is the result of the Change Agent Program of the Ontario Women's Directorate. It was co-produced by the Ontario Women's Directorate and the Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association.

This publication is the product of collaborative efforts by many people and includes the talented work of a number of Aboriginal firms. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following:

Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association
Lorraine Gisborn and Brad Thompson

Ontario Women's Directorate
Susan McMurray, Ellen Passmore, and Marie Rochon

Obonsawin-Irwin Consulting Inc.
Research and Writing

Three Sisters Multi Media Design
Design and Production

Greg Staats
Photography

Most particularly we would like to thank the women who are profiled in this publication for their hard work, for overcoming the barriers they faced, and for the inspiration they offer.

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JOSEPHINE BEAUCAGE

AN ELDER SPEAKS

One of the very important cultural values of Native people is respect for the wisdom and advice of elders. We spoke to Josephine Beaucage, an 86-year-old Ojibway elder who is recognized nationally as a teacher and artisan. She gives the following advice to Aboriginal women. She also hopes it will give employers some insight about Native people:

"I think it is so important for Native women, when they start thinking about going out to work, to think about all of the skills that they have and how they can put these to use in a job. You also have to find something that you enjoy because then you are going to be a conscientious and steady worker which most employers want.

When I was growing up, I never thought that I would end up teaching but I am still doing it to this day and enjoying it just as much as when I started. The job that I have now with the Toronto Board of Education is part-time.

One of the things that has not changed which I find very sad is that there is still a lot of discrimination against our people. When I moved to Toronto in 1964 because of my husband's illness, I had a hard time adjusting. Many of our people who move from their reserves or communities go through this. You feel like you don't belong, like you're not wanted. People make fun of you, refuse you housing or jobs or make derogatory comments about our people. I found that I had to really assert myself. Often, I would try to educate them but many times, I just ignored them if I felt they were looking for an argument. Many people forget that we are the First Nations of this country.

When we have to move from our communities, it is helpful to seek out other Native people to spend time with, to build a community away from home. In this way, we can support each other and help one another to adjust. It has helped me to know other Native people in the city. The city is hard to get used to. Everything is so fast-moving and you can get lost in it. Being close to other Native people helps you to remember who you are."

ABOUT THE PROFILES

The six accomplished Aboriginal women featured in the following profiles were selected from an extensive list of Aboriginal women from across Ontario. Selection was done in a way that would reflect the diversity of First Nations in Ontario, ensure regional representation, and also cover a range of careers and occupations.

These women have successfully overcome many barriers with support from their families, communities and employers. There are other Aboriginal women like them. Unfortunately, there are still others who have skills and are capable who have found the doors closed to them. Employers can help open these doors by setting policies that recognize cultural differences and by learning how to manage a diverse work force.

EVELYN CORBIERE

Odawa
Principal, Pontiac School
Wikwemikong First Nation
Wikwemikong

"Respect yourself
Respect others
Respect your environment."

Respecting yourself, others, and your environment are the ground rules that Evelyn Corbiere gives to the students at Pontiac School where she has been the Principal since 1982. These rules are reminiscent of the traditional Native values taught to Evelyn by her own parents when she was growing up.

Pontiac School is located in Wikwemikong, an Indian Reserve on Manitoulin Island. The school has an enrolment of 170 students from grades five to eight and includes a program for students who have special needs because of physical or developmental disabilities. As the Principal, Evelyn is responsible for the overall administration of the school and the supervision of the teaching staff. She ensures that the guidelines and courses of study are being followed, that timetables are drawn up and that the needs of the staff and students

are being met.

Wikwemikong is Evelyn's home community, and it is one of the largest Indian reserves in Ontario, with a population of approximately 2,200 Ojibway, Odawa, and Potowatomi people. Evelyn grew up with three sisters and one brother and parents who placed a high value on education.

"My parents gave me a lot of encouragement to go to school. Both of them completed grade eight, and they wanted me to go further in school than they did." When it came time for Evelyn to enter high school, there was no question in her mind that she would continue on even though it meant moving some 300 miles away from home. Like many reserves, Wikwemikong lacks a secondary school.

Evelyn was unprepared for the cultural shock that she experienced, and she recalls, "All of a sudden, I was faced with the fact that I was different when people started asking me complicated questions about being Indian. I wasn't prepared for the questions or the interest that people took in the fact that I was Indian. I started feeling that maybe I couldn't do as well in this non-Indian environment." Many of her friends from Wikwemikong, unable to cope with the cultural shock, dropped out of school to return home.

Evelyn stayed on to pursue her studies, bolstered by support from her parents and her teachers. Her decision to become a teacher was greatly influenced by her parents. "The language, respect, sharing and taking care of each other are the traditional values that I learned from my parents. They lived these values and they expected that we would model ourselves after them." A career in teaching, she felt, would give her the opportunity to help others overcome the barriers that she had faced.

Evelyn started her teaching career in Espanola, Ontario after graduation from Teacher's College in 1962. In 1968, she returned to Wikwemikong to teach at Pontiac School and has worked there ever since.

Since then, she has acquired both her bachelor's and master's degrees through part-time studies as well as her Principal's certificate. She and her husband have raised four sons who are now between 12 and 20 years old.

When Evelyn tells Native women to "complete your education when you're young because it is difficult to do when you are older, with a family, and doing it piecemeal," she speaks from experience. Balancing her combined responsibilities as a wife, mother of four young sons and career woman while taking university studies part-time, required great skill in organization and time management. A supportive husband and good child care support from people whom she knew and trusted were crucial in helping Evelyn reach her goals.

When the position of Principal was first advertised by the Band, Evelyn assessed her skills and capabilities and concluded that there was no reason why she could not do the job. She was awarded the position in 1982 and enjoys the challenges it offers.

On a typical day, Evelyn might meet with the 12 teaching staff whom she supervises, sit in on their classes, meet with students or hold budget discussions with her supervisor. She might also meet with the principals of the high schools that Pontiac graduates attend. Of her work, Evelyn says that the job is full of rewards. "I enjoy going to my job and I enjoy the people that I work with. This is important because it permeates throughout the whole school. The students notice this and they feel good about coming here. It motivates them to continue on. The one thing we don't have a problem with at Pontiac is attendance."

Sara Peltier, Director of Education for Wikwemikong First Nation and Evelyn's immediate supervisor says, "Evelyn is enthusiastic about her work and is able to maintain high staff morale. She ensures that the student is the focus and she keeps the staff on target by setting goals. She is quite strong in the area of program development and makes sure that the curriculum meets the needs of the students."

The program development and administrative skills that Evelyn has developed over the years are also being put to good use for the benefit of the Wikwemikong Anishnawbe Association for Community Living. She serves on the Board of Directors for this organization which offers programs for developmentally and physically disabled adults. While it currently offers only day programs, Evelyn talks about their plans to add an apartment complex so that the program participants can live independently.

Aboriginal women are gaining more confidence and acquiring a stronger voice, according to Evelyn, and more are moving into jobs such as management positions that have been traditionally occupied by men. She encourages this development and tells Aboriginal women to, "Set career goals but be prepared to work hard to achieve those goals. Don't be afraid to take anything on and don't limit yourself. The labor market is extremely competitive so make sure that you have the educational qualifications to back you up."

Her advice to employers who want to hire and keep Aboriginal women on their staff: "Our cultural values have a lot to do with respect — respect for everybody and everything. Aboriginal women have a different way of communicating and working with people. Their approach may not be as aggressive as non-Native people, but it is very effective. Learn to recognize and appreciate these cultural differences."

SHARLA DOUGLAS

Ojibway
Speech-Language Pathologist
Network North
Manitoulin Island

"I went back to school because I wanted a career that was challenging, that gave me opportunities for both personal and professional growth."

When Sharla Douglas was 18 years old, she dropped out of grade 13 to become a waitress. After eight months, she became disillusioned with the work because of the low pay and the working conditions. Now, several years later, Sharla is a speech-language pathologist, a high-demand profession that pays well. She is loving her work.

Sharla, who is Ojibway, grew up on the Rama Reserve near Orillia. Returning to school had been her goal after a brief stint as a waitress but she had difficulty deciding on her long-term career goal. In 1979, she moved to Edmonton and quickly got a job as a secretary-receptionist. Sharla admits that she had no secretarial skills at the time, but she learned fast.

After two years, she left for a more challenging position with a Native newspaper where she was involved in every aspect of newspaper production. Unfortunately, the newspaper folded, forcing Sharla to return to secretarial work, this time as an executive secretary for a consulting firm. Sharla says, "I enjoyed it but the pay wasn't great, and there was little chance for promotion. You go from secretary-receptionist to secretary to executive secretary and that's it. I wanted more."

Sharla began researching health

professions. She had an interest in this field for a long time because both her mother and older sister had been Registered Nurses. After exploring the different health career programs offered by the University of Alberta and investigating the labor market, she decided on speech-language pathology. She learned that it was a growing field and that the profession was in high demand. Now that she had a clear career goal in mind, she started working towards it.

University admission requirements had to be met so she began upgrading while she was still working. As a Status Indian, she knew that she was eligible for post-secondary educational assistance from her home reserve. She spoke with the education counsellor at Rama Reserve. The counsellor assured her that her university costs, including tuition, books and living expenses, would be covered by the Reserve.

When she entered university, she found that she was the only Aboriginal student in the program. She found university life overwhelming, and it was not until her third year that she discovered a Native Students Association on campus. This was a good support network for her. "We became a close-knit group. We studied together and the support of the group helped me to deal better with the pressures of university." She had also developed another important support in Edmonton, a group of traditional Native people who were instrumental in helping her to both achieve her goals and to maintain her traditional values. She says that, "It is difficult for Aboriginal students to cope with the loneliness of being away from their families and their cultural communities while adjusting to the demands of university life. It's important to find Native people to support you wherever you are."

In 1986, Sharla graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Speech Pathology/Audiology. When she started applying for jobs, she knew that she wanted to work with Native people. She started working with Network North in 1986 when it was known as the Sudbury-Algoma Hospital. She had done some research on the organization to make sure that it had the kind of work environment that she wanted — one that placed a high priority on continuing professional development.

A speech-language pathologist, Sharla explains, assesses and diagnoses a speech or language disorder. A treatment program is then designed for the individual and therapy is provided. "It could be a speech problem or an articulation problem where they have trouble pronouncing certain sounds. They might have a hearing problem that affects how they learn speech or language because they might miss some of the information that is being communicated to them. They might stutter or have a voice problem. There is a wide range of possible disorders."

In her job with Network North, Sharla works with a wide variety of cases in 12 communities on Manitoulin Island including six Indian Reserves. Working with school boards and clinics gives her the opportunity to work with both adults and children. Nadmadwin Mental Health Clinic in Wikwemikong is one of the clinics where Sharla works. Dan Manitowabi, Manager of the clinic says of Sharla, "As a Native professional, Sharla has been a real asset to our organization. She is helping not just by providing a direct, professional service to the community but also by being there as a role model."

Being based on Manitoulin Island, Sharla has limited contact with the other clinicians in the Speech-Language Service. She meets with her supervisor monthly and consults with him and the other clinicians by telephone when necessary. She likes the independence of working on her own and setting her work priorities. Frank DeMarco, Supervisor of Speech-Language Service, describes Sharla as "a very well-organized individual who works well independently and is extremely thorough and professional in her work. She has benefitted the organization by giving the Speech-Language Service a more positive profile through her work on the Island."

Sharla finds the extra time needed for activities that will help break down some of the barriers for Aboriginal students. She is a frequent participant at career fairs in local high schools where she talks to Aboriginal students not only about the academic requirements for a career in speech-language pathology, but also about her own experiences. She would definitely like to see more Native people in the field because she feels a sense of professional isolation particularly when dealing with cultural issues that may affect assessment or treatment of a speech or language problem. Another important activity for Sharla is membership on the Social Service Research Advisory Group which is based in Sudbury. This group assesses the need for programs in communities in the Sudbury-Manitoulin area, and Sharla ensures attention is given to Native needs.

One of the biggest barriers for Aboriginal women, says Sharla, is stereotyping. "People think that we're uneducated and unreliable. This is changing slowly as more non-Native people become educated about us." People often expect her to be an expert on Natives and Native issues and she diplomatically tells them that she can only speak from her own experience and voice her own opinion.

In choosing a career, she advises Aboriginal women to"choose a career that goes with your personality. If you like working with people, don't choose a career where you will be working in isolation. Go for the best training possible and don't take shortcuts. Definitely look at the job prospects, keeping in mind whether you want to return to your home community when you graduate."

Employers, she says, should keep an open mind when hiring Aboriginal people. "Very often, employers will hire Aboriginal staff just to work with Aboriginal clients. Trained Aboriginal professionals are just as capable of working with non-Aboriginal clients."

YVONNE LEAF

Mohawk
Entrepreneur
Akwesasne Reserve
Cornwall

"Being a woman and being a Native meant that there were obstacles, but to me, the obstacles just spelled out challenge."

Yvonne Leaf is a Mohawk woman from Akwesasne with training in non-traditional work who owns three businesses. She has successfully overcome many obstacles.

Yvonne grew up in the United States with eight brothers and sisters. She was first exposed to women in non-traditional work through her mother who was a machinist with a company that was forging and processing metals for tools. Yvonne says of her mother, "My mother was never afraid to work and she took whatever was available. She enjoyed machining and she was one of only two women machinists in that factory." Her parents decided to move the family back to Akwesasne when Yvonne was nine because they wanted their children to be part of the Mohawk culture. On the reserve, Yvonne spent time learning from her father who was a carpenter and fisherman. He was an ex-

tremely patient teacher who took it in stride when Yvonne, at the age of 11, stripped an engine apart when he wasn't looking.

Akwesasne, where Yvonne lives today, has a population of 8,500 and is uniquely situated, straddling the Canada-United States border as well as the Ontario-Quebec border. This location has been an advantage for Yvonne when looking for a job in non-traditional fields. While attending high school in Cornwall, she was the only female taking technical courses. She wanted summer jobs where she could practise these skills but one of the barriers that she faced was the reluctance of Canadian companies to hire women in non-traditional jobs. She overcame this barrier by working in the United States where the companies were more receptive.

Yvonne decided in 1973 that she wanted to run her own business because "I wanted to be my own boss and dictate my own hours." Knowing, however, that she needed more skills, she sought a job with AT&T because of their staff training program. She stayed with them for five years as a special sales representative, taking many transfers and training courses and learning marketing and sales techniques.

In 1980, she returned to Akwesasne and set up an industrial sewing business with her sister. Yvonne's responsibility was marketing, getting contracts and maintaining the machinery. Shortly after, Yvonne established Leaf Construction, a consulting business that helps local contractors in working out their bids for contracts, estimating costs, manpower and equipment requirements, and work schedules.

In 1980, Yvonne also decided to take the 52-week Industrial Maintenance Mechanic course at St. Lawrence College. She was motivated by two factors — she wanted to show that women were capable of doing non-traditional work, and she wanted to learn more skills to apply in her own business. Being the only Aboriginal woman in the course met with some initial resistance from both classmates and instructors. Acceptance from her classmates came about only when they discovered her exceptional skill in mathematics and sciences and she began tutoring five students on a regular basis.

Her instructors gave her little support and so when she learned part way through the course that she was pregnant, she did not let them know. She felt that they would view her pregnancy as a barrier and that they might try to prevent her from completing the course. Her applications for the work placement component of the course met with rejection from three businesses in Cornwall which she attributes solely to the fact that she is a woman. A hospital, however, accepted her application to work in their maintenance department. She graduated from the course with distinctive honours in December 5, 1980 and a week later, she gave birth to her fifth child.

A month later, feeling the need for further training, Yvonne enrolled in a four-month welding course. After completing the course, she and another Aboriginal woman went to Montreal to take their welding certification test. The inspector who had been sent in from New York State refused to allow them to take the test. When Yvonne lodged a complaint with his superior, she learned that Aboriginal women regularly received this treatment from the inspector. Yvonne and her friend were given another opportunity to take the welding test. Although Yvonne declined taking the test, her friend did and passed it.

Of this experience, Yvonne says, "At first I thought that this had been a waste of my time but later I looked at it as a good learning experience. There are all kinds of people who will act as obstacles to reaching your goals. I learned there are ways to overcome them."

Yvonne opened her third business in 1986 — a stationery and art supplies shop. One of her biggest rewards in this business is being able to promote young, aspiring artists from the community.

Her keen sense of responsibility toward her community, combined with her desire to learn, led her to run for a position on the Mohawk Council, a position she held for five years. Her responsibilities included land claims research and membership, and she also took a special interest in education. The public relations skills that she had acquired in her jobs proved useful in Native presentations and lobbying Ministers at the First Ministers Constitutional Conference in 1983.

She is also a much sought-after speaker because of her experience in non-traditional work. Most recently, she was invited to be part of a new initiative in her area, working with both employers and women to promote women in non-traditional work, designed to break down the barriers faced by women. Yvonne is hopeful that education and public relations efforts with employers, and networking and peer support among the women, will open up opportunities that have been denied to women.

An acquaintance of long-standing, Olivia Redeye, describes Yvonne as "an energetic and dynamic individual and a successful businesswoman who is very involved in the community and is particularly concerned about the youth."

Both Yvonne and her husband enjoy working with the young people and organize many recreational activities for them. Yvonne has been able to successfully break down barriers she has encountered and has used her skills and experience in developing her businesses, raising her five children and helping her community. She tells employers that, "New blood and new ideas are what make companies thrive and succeed. Employers suffer a severe loss if they close their doors and their minds to certain groups of people."

AGNES LIDSTONE

Metis

Former Promotions Manager, Canadian Tire Store

Presently owner-operator, M & A Convenience Store

Sault Ste. Marie

"I got great satisfaction from putting products in different areas and watching how they turned over and seeing the sales that would result. I enjoyed trying a new idea or new concept in another corner of the store and seeing the results. This kind of thing really motivated me."

Agnes Lidstone, a Metis woman who was born and raised in Sault Ste. Marie, talks with great enthusiasm about her experience in retail.

She started working for Canadian Tire as a clerk in the hardware department 16 years ago and worked her way up to a position as Manager of Promotions and Display with a staff of 19 reporting to her. In this position she was responsible for the store's weekly flyers, in-store displays and buying and ordering all of the store's fixturing. She recently left Canadian Tire to open her own business, using the skills she gained at Canadian Tire.

Agnes was born to a Metis mother and a Norwegian father and was raised in Sault Ste. Marie along with her four brothers and three sisters. As a child, Agnes was very much aware of her Aboriginal heritage. Her maternal grandmother lived with them,

and she grew up hearing the Ojibway language spoken and although she does not speak it, she has a familiarity with it. Agnes was the only one in her family to finish high school. She attributes this to the encouragement and support of her mother, whom Agnes describes as the "single, biggest influence" in her life. She was one of the youngest in the family and she recalls her mother stressing the importance of education and finishing high school to increase her chances for a better job. So, early on, Agnes set a goal for herself to finish grade 12. Doing well in school came easy to her even though her family moved frequently. Her parents separated when she was eight years old. Her mother was then a single parent on social assistance.

Agnes says her interest in retail goes back to high school where she studied marketing. The concepts that she learned in the marketing course made sense to her and they appealed to her imagination.

In 1973, she began her career in retail. By this time, she had graduated from high school and was married with one child.

Agnes stayed with her first employer for one year, where she worked in receiving and in sales. She made the decision to leave this company because she felt her opportunities for advancement were limited. Canadian Tire at that time was building a new store in Sault Ste. Marie. She applied in 1974, and started her career with Canadian Tire as a sales clerk. After just one month, she was promoted to the position of Assistant Manager of the Hardware Department. When the newly created job of Promotions Manager was advertised, she applied for it and received a promotion.

Ken Safruk, the General Manager of the store and Agnes's immediate supervisor, speaks highly of her abilities. "Agnes had a lot of initiative and creativity. She quickly grasped what was expected of her and carried it out. She was excellent and we thought a lot of her as an employee. This is why we promoted her. She accomplished goals, met deadlines and was good at motivating people."

Paul Dalseg, the owner of the store, describes Agnes as "having a particular business sense about her, always looking at ways of doing things better. She had good leadership qualities and was well-liked by her staff."

As Promotions Manager, Agnes was responsible for doing ordering, warehousing, and inventory control for her department. She played a key role in any major changeover such as remodelling of the store, reviewing blueprints, and ordering all the fixtures. Other departments which were doing setups depended on her for advice and assistance. She controlled the high traffic areas of the store, deciding on what was to be set up on the front checkout counters and the main aisles. Agnes involved staff in major decisions by asking for their ideas and opinions. This process obviously worked because she says of her staff, "I found them very supportive. When I needed them, they always came through."

Because of her leadership abilities, Agnes was given the added responsibilities of being the store's Education Coordinator. This included conducting motivation seminars for over 200 staff. She was also a major organizer of extra-curricular activities for the store's employees and started a number of staff sports leagues.

Agnes describes Canadian Tire as an excellent employer. While the salary, the benefits, and the profit-sharing plan were important to her, even more importantly, there were opportunities to learn, to develop skills, and to advance her career.

Fortunately, child care arrangements were not a problem for Agnes. She took a brief leave from Canadian Tire when her second child was born, but she has always been able to depend on family members to provide good child care for her two daughters.

Five years ago, Agnes became actively involved in the Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association (OMAA), the provincial association that represents people of Aboriginal ancestry who live off-reserve. She is a member of the OMAA Board of Directors and is also the Vice-President of Zone 4. (OMAA has divided the province into five zones, each of which has several OMAA local groups in various communities.)

As the Zone Director, Agnes is responsible for fundraising activities and the development of Aboriginal social services to enhance family well-being. As a member of the governing Board, Agnes is committed to furthering the goals and objectives of OMAA including public education, local community development and economic and business development. As a Director, she chose a special responsibility for Aboriginal women because she knows the tremendous barriers that they face.

Creating opportunities for Aboriginal women is something in which Agnes has experience. While at Canadian Tire, she made a special effort to hire Aboriginal people on her staff, giving them the extra time and support that she felt they needed. "Native women are already categorized before they even apply for a job and this is the biggest barrier - the stereotyping. We have to work harder to prove that what they're saying isn't true - that we can do the job, that we do have the skills. This makes it more difficult for us."

Agnes advises Aboriginal women to "complete your education. Then start getting out there and putting in your applications. Go with a positive attitude, that you know how to do the job and that you can do the job. Don't believe that because you are a Native you can't succeed."

Employers, she says, "should start training their managers to be more open to hiring Aboriginal staff and to be more understanding once they are hired. Employers should start looking at Aboriginal people in a more positive light and not rely on stereotypes. There are many capable Native people out there."

JEANETTE POSINE-AVILA

Ojibway
Shift Maintainer Apprentice
Ontario Hydro
Thunder Bay

"You have to have an open mind. Be open to all kinds of careers. If you don't try non-traditional work, you'll never know if you like it."

Jeanette Posine-Avila has been a Shift Maintainer Apprentice with Ontario Hydro since July 1989. Her introduction to non-traditional work came from a family friend who suggested she take the 20-week Women in Trades and Technology (WITT) course being offered at Thunder Bay's Confederation College. At the time, Jeanette was working as a bookkeeper for the Pays Plat Indian Band, her home reserve, and taking correspondence courses to become a Certified General Accountant. She had been thinking about a career change, however, because she wanted a more physically demanding job.

Jeanette enrolled in the WITT course and completed a three-week placement at Ontario Hydro. By the time she graduated she had decided on two things: she wanted to work in a non-traditional field, and she wanted a career with Ontario Hydro. She met

with her placement supervisor and the training officer at Ontario Hydro and asked them how to increase her chances of getting a job with them. Following up on their suggestion, she enrolled in the Industrial Maintenance Mechanic course at Confederation College. Before she started, however, she learned she was pregnant and took a year off. For Jeanette, being a single mother meant only a postponement of her career plans and in 1986, she relocated to Timmins where she had family support to attend college. She moved back to Thunder Bay to do her work placement, again with Ontario Hydro.

Jeanette's determination and careful career planning paid off with a full-time job at Ontario Hydro in 1989. Doing her work placements there had accomplished several things for her. She became familiar with their work environment and their expectations, she demonstrated her interest in the organization, and they became familiar with her work. By asking their advice on what would make her more employable in their eyes, she was able to get a direction for her training, and she was able to show her employer that she was motivated and capable of following through. Rene Gravelle who is a human resources officer with Ontario Hydro says that Jeanette's work placements gave them a good chance to assess her work and that this increased her chances of securing permanent employment with them.

Jeannette also took other steps to further her career goal. These steps included updating her application, dropping into the plant, maintaining contact with her former co-workers and getting to know the training officer.

While she was taking the welding course at Confederation College, just prior to her job with Hydro, Jeanette gained additional experience in the non-traditional field on a volunteer basis. She says, "When you're applying for work in the non-traditional field, you have to show that you're interested. I went to one of my teachers and asked him to help me find an employer who would take me for a few hours a day because I needed some on-the-job training working in industry. Even though I was in school, I worked part-time, and I wasn't paid for a lot of my time. I wanted the experience of working around men because it would make it easier for me once I got a permanent job."

Jeanette received educational assistance through her home Band because she is a Status Indian. This covered tuition, books, living expenses and a portion of her child care expenses. Because she was receiving sponsorship through her Band, she was not eligible for a child care subsidy and had to take out a loan from the Ontario Students Assistance Program. Ironically, once she started working, she became eligible for a day care subsidy.

Initially, child care was a problem for Jeanette. Babysitters were hard to find and provided inconsistent care when her son was too young for the minimum age requirements for most day care centres. However, when he was 16 months old, she found a day care centre that agreed to take him.

Jeanette has been greatly guided by the influence of her mother who raised three children as a single mother in Geraldton. Jeanette remembers that her mother always worked, sometimes at two or three jobs, to provide for her children. Jeanette says of her mother, "I learned from her that you have to work hard at what you want. She has worked hard all of her life and her attitude rubbed off on me."

The Shift Maintainer Apprenticeship program takes six years to complete after which Jeanette will be a skilled tradesperson. Productive work is combined with classroom instruction and on-the-job training. The job is not repetitious, and this is one of the main features that Jeanette enjoys. "The plant is so large, and every day there is something different to do. Being in multi-trades, I get to develop an overall view of everything, and I'm able to try a lot of things." The position pays well, starting at an hourly rate of just over ten dollars and going up to about twenty-three dollars once you have completed the program.

Typically, Jeanette's duties include welding, plumbing, machining, piping, fixing valves and using equipment such as drill presses and band saws. She has found her male colleagues to be helpful and supportive. When she became pregnant with her second child, she found her co-workers very accommodating, temporarily switching her to lighter duties and providing greater assistance to her.

Mike Sakula, Jeanette's supervisor, has worked with her for a number of years and supervised her during her work placements. He says of Jeanette, "She is a hard worker and she is very willing to do the work, to do her share. Workers are the backbone of Ontario Hydro and with more training, Jeanette will become an even more valuable worker, a key team player."

Jeanette is often called upon to go on speaking engagements to high schools to promote non-traditional jobs for women. She encourages Aboriginal women to get more exposure to different careers and not limit themselves to just what they see in their immediate environment. The minimum educational requirement for an apprenticeship position with Ontario Hydro is grade 12 and Jeanette advises Native girls to complete high school. She tells friends who are single parents to complete their grade 12 while they are home with their children. By way of advice to Aboriginal women, Jeanette shares her own personal philosophy: "If you want something, you have to go out and work for it. And if you work hard enough for what you want, you get it. But be persistent!" Jeanette advises employers to, "Be aware that discrimination exists in the workplace, and when hiring employees from the designated groups, prepare your existing employees beforehand and try to break down the stereotypes that exist in people's minds. You could bring in the new employee before they actually start the job and introduce them to the other staff. This would benefit everybody."

JEAN ROACH

Cree
District Manager, Finance and Administration
Public Works Canada
Sault Ste. Marie

"I want to be highly regarded as an employee, to be known as someone who gets the job done effectively and efficiently."

Being highly regarded as an employee and being known as someone who gets the job done effectively and efficiently is what creates job satisfaction for Jean Roach, District Manager of Finance and Administration for Public Works Canada. Public Works Canada manages property for the federal government and helps government departments with planning, design, construction and realty services. Jean's job is to provide financial and administrative support services to the northern district offices. This includes accounting and control of expenditures, financial reporting, contract tendering and materials management.

Jean has come a long way since she started her career with the federal government in an entry-level position as a clerk with the Department of Indian Affairs. In 1974, she had enrolled in a clerk-typist course of-

fered through the James Bay Education Centre in Moosonee after a relative had moved in to care for her three children. It was while she was on a work placement with Indian Affairs that she was offered a job with them. After four years, wanting more responsibility and challenge, she decided on a career in financial management. She took a year's leave of absence without pay to take the first year of a Business Administration Program at Northern College in South Porcupine.

Jean, who is Cree, grew up in the Indian community of Moose Factory, an island in the mouth of the Moose River with a population of 1,800. Her parents, who themselves had little education, had always encouraged her to stay in school. Jean was an "A" student until she had to move to Sault Ste. Marie to finish high school. She had difficulty adjusting to a non-Native urban environment where there was little support. Discouraged, she dropped out of school a year and a half later when she was 17. She got married and had her first child shortly after.

Jean had always wanted to return to school. When she attended Northern College in 1979, it was like a dream come true. Separation from her family combined with financial constraints did not keep her from making the Dean's Honour List. A three hundred dollar bursary from the Ontario Metis and Non-Status Indian Association (now the Ontario Metis and Aboriginal Association) was the only assistance she received. She returned to work after her first year of college only to learn that her application for educational leave with partial pay had been refused. Jean treated this setback as a challenge because she still wanted to upgrade her employment skills and told her employers that she was eager for any training that would help her reach her career goal. A strong support network of "people who believed in me before I believed in myself" gave her encouragement and positive feedback on her professional progress.

The position of Superintendent of Finance and Administration with the Moose Factory Indian Affairs office was offered to Jean on an underfill basis because she lacked all of the qualifications. After two years she was awarded the position at full pay. Of her first few months on the job as a "financial watchdog" Jean says, "There was a lot of frustration. I had no training in management or leadership so I was learning through experience."

In 1985, Jean applied for her current job. She did extensive research on Public Works Canada in preparation for her interview. When offered the job, she relocated to Sault Ste. Marie. She supervises 10 financial and administrative staff, reviews financial reports they have prepared, makes sure that her office is spending within the allocated budget, and conducts work performance evaluations with her staff. She also discusses policy changes and their implications with the regional office in Toronto.

Working at a management level is rewarding for Jean. "I like the responsibility, the decision-making and the salary. Moving up the ladder makes you feel good because you are getting recognition for your hard work."

Don Fitzpatrick, Regional Director of Corporate Management for Public Works Canada, is based in Toronto and is Jean's supervisor. He speaks highly of her abilities. "She runs the entire operation in Sault Ste. Marie and has been very successful in giving the department a strong profile in the district. She is a people-oriented manager who is very supportive of her staff and is able to maintain high staff morale. She welcomes change instead of resisting it and passes this enthusiasm on to her staff."

Jean has also actively sought challenge in volunteer work in the community. She has been Chairperson of the Moose Factory School Board. Two reasons motivated her involvement: concern about the quality of education and the desire to overcome her fear of public speaking. Her skills in public speaking improved with practice and she has been able to apply these skills in her work when making presentations.

In pursuing career goals, Jean advises Aboriginal women to "take risks but seek out people who will encourage and support you in reaching your career goals. An educational background makes it easier when you are applying for a job; you don't immediately get screened out. More importantly, it gives you the self-confidence you need because it is very competitive out there."

For employers who want to hire and retain Aboriginal women on their staff, Jean cautions them that Aboriginal women are generally not boastful about their accomplishments. "Don't judge Aboriginal women merely on how they come across in an interview. They may be quiet and not aggressive but this does not mean they cannot do the job or that they are incapable of learning. Many employers lose potentially valuable employees because they are not sensitive to the different ways that Aboriginal people may communicate."

ABORIGINAL WOMEN IN ONTARIO

WHO ARE ABORIGINAL WOMEN?

Aboriginal women in Ontario are a very diverse group - culturally, linguistically and geographically. They are represented in all of the different regions in the province, from the remote northern fly-in communities to the major metropolitan centres in the south. They are from many different First Nations, including Cree, Odawa, Mohawk and Metis. Some have retained a fluency in their Aboriginal language, while others have lost their language or have never been fluent in it.

Aboriginal women do share some common characteristics. For example, the women who are profiled in this book are all hard-working and have benefitted their employers in many ways. These particular women also had parents who emphasized the importance of education, and had family support for their child care responsibilities. There is one other thing however, that Aboriginal women share in common. They suffer a double disadvantage in getting a job or making progress in their career because they are female and because they are Aboriginal.

The 1981 Census of Canada was the first census to include specific questions relating to Native status. The following information about Aboriginal women is based on data collected through this Census. [1]

Aboriginal women in Ontario...

- In 1981, there were 57,830 women of Aboriginal ancestry in Ontario. This included Status Indians, non-Status Indians, and Metis. Aboriginal women outnumber their male counterparts by more than 5,000.
- The 1991 projected growth rate for Status Indians is 1.86% while the provincial growth rate is less than one percent.[2]

Their homes...

- Almost 50% lived in rural areas, including on reserve.
- Thirty percent (30%) lived in large urban centres with populations of 100,000 and over.
- Twenty percent (20%) lived in smaller urban centres.

Their work...

- More than 35,000 Aboriginal women were of working age, i.e., between the ages of 15 to 64 years.
- Only 38% of working age Aboriginal women were employed at the time of the census. In comparison, approximately 51% of non-Aboriginal women are employed and about 60% of Aboriginal men are employed.
- Status Indian women living on reserve had the lowest employment rates at 26% compared to 57% of Status Indian men living on-reserve.
- Aboriginal women have lower levels of full-time work than any group in the province.
- In 1980, Aboriginal women had the lowest average annual income of any group in Ontario. For Status Indian women, the average income was $5,746, and for other Aboriginal women, it was $6,644.
- For the same year, non-Aboriginal women had an average income of $8,660, and for non-Aboriginal men, it was $17,557.

Their families...

- The size of families among the Aboriginal population is larger than among the non-Aboriginal population.
- Seventeen percent (17%) of all Aboriginal families are headed by single Aboriginal mothers while 9% of non-Aboriginal families were headed by single mothers.

A higher proportion of Ontario's Aboriginal population is younger than that of the non-Aboriginal population. In 1981, 36% of the Aboriginal population was under 14 years of age compared to 23% of the non-Aboriginal population. Because of this, Aboriginal people will make up a larger part of the new workforce well into the twenty-first century. This is particularly true of Aboriginal women whose rates of participation in paid employment, currently quite low, can only increase.

1. The 1986 Census data were not used because their validity is challenged due to the questionable participation rate of Aboriginal people.

2. Ministry of Citizenship; Status Report; Ontario Native Population, June, 1989.

BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

Aboriginal women suffer from the double effects of gender and racial bias. This means that they typically experience lower levels of employment than their male counterparts as well as non-Aboriginals, whether male or female. The occupations they are in tend to be those with the lowest average pay, the greatest tendency for part-time and/or seasonal work, and the least opportunity for advancement.

Aboriginal women confront barriers in trying to achieve their career goals. These barriers are most often employment policies and practices that exclude them from participating as equals "on-the-job." Such barriers are called "systemic discrimination." For instance, a company policy that every worker must work overtime will impact differently on women, because many have child care responsibilities which they cannot coordinate with overtime requirements. Such a policy would be systemic discrimination for women.

A company policy that requires extensive formal education for a clerical position will impact differently on many Aboriginal women, because geographical location has prevented them from attaining high levels of formal education. This is another example of systemic discrimination.

In both cases, the women may be quite capable of doing the job but will be prevented from doing so because of company policies "applied equally to all." For further information on "systemic discrimination" please see pages 24 and 26.

Ten barriers to career progress:

1. Opportunities for training and education are frequently not available to Aboriginal women living on-reserve or in rural areas.

2. Aboriginal women are commonly perceived as unreliable and unstable employees. This is particularly so if an employer has had a negative experience with an Aboriginal employee which is then taken to be reflective of all Aboriginal people.

3. There is a tendency among Aboriginal women, as is also true among other cultures, to downgrade their skills and experience on their resumes and in job interviews because cultural norms discourage self-promotion. This often results in Aboriginal women being eliminated in the hiring process.

4. Because of different cultural norms, Aboriginal women may be seen as lacking sophisticated communication and social skills. In reality, patterns of communication and relating to people are simply different. For example, aggressive behaviour is not valued in Native culture. Co-workers may view them as aloof and unfriendly, and supervisors may see them as lacking potential for advancement and training.

   In fact, as the profiles show, different cultural norms may allow Aboriginal women to bring positive (not only different) ways of dealing with people to their jobs. They may be better at motivating people and at including them in decision-making processes.

5. Some employers mistakenly perceive the cultural differences to be so vast that they are nervous about hiring Aboriginal women because they feel that neither they nor their other employees will be able to relate to them.

6. Discrimination is encountered by Aboriginal women in the workplace in many forms. In reacting to discrimination, rather than "create a fuss," many Aboriginal women will simply walk away from their jobs. This results in a "spotty" employment record, and often means an inability to secure a good reference. Instances of sexual harassment and other problems in the workplace may be responded to in the same manner.

7. There is a stereotype of all Aboriginal women as having low levels of both education and skills. This leads to placement in jobs with low salaries and no opportunities for career advancement.

8. For Aboriginal women who are required to move from their home community for reasons of employment or training, it means a loss of vital family and community support systems. A new support network, often among Native organizations, has to be developed at the same time that she is adjusting to a new job or a training program.

9. Because of the lack of adequate or appropriate child care facilities, many Aboriginal women are prevented from entering the workforce. As noted, single Aboriginal mothers head 17% of all Aboriginal families.

10. Aboriginal women lack positive role models because there is little recognition and promotion of successful Aboriginal women.

These barriers can be overcome by employers working in close co-operation with Aboriginal women and Aboriginal organizations. The "Tips" and "Resources" section later in this book can help.

SUMMARY:

The women profiled in this book show that there are Aboriginal women who have successfully overcome these barriers. They have viewed the barriers as challenges rather than insurmountable obstacles, and they have had support from families, friends, their communities, and their employers. These employers recognize the importance of managing diversity in the work force. They are able to see the skills and potential of different workers and to appreciate the differences. They create a win/win situation.

In this section of the book, we look at how to develop career options and how to plan for your career development. The women, whose stories appeared earlier in the book, followed many of these steps in their career. We can all learn from their success.

Getting Started:

How to find the job that is best for you

Skills and Interests

Everyone develops skills and interests. The first step in planning a career is to know the skills you have and your interests. Before you start looking for a job, ask yourself these questions:

- What jobs have you had?
- What did you like or dislike about these jobs?
- Have you done any volunteer work?
- What skills have you learned from your jobs or volunteer work?
- What education have you had? What level? What subject areas?
- Have you taken any courses or training to improve your skills?
- What are your special interests?

Matching Your Skills and Interests to Available Jobs

Once you have listed your skills and interests, and perhaps written them down, you'll need to match these to the job market.

Many communities have job counselling services. Please check our "Resources" Section.

You should find out the skills that employers are looking for. For example, there are shortages today in the skilled trades. You can get this information from your local Canada Employment Centre or the Ministry of Skills Development.

Is there a company that you would like to work for? Call or write to the company and ask for an information package and descriptions of job openings. Talk to someone who works there now or who has worked there before. You can also get information from the library.

Which companies offer training to their employees? Which ones will give you the opportunity to be promoted from one position to another?

Do you need further training to match yourself with available jobs? Check the "Resources" Section in this publication. You may also want to consider volunteering in an area which relates to your skills and interests, in order to gain additional experience.

As You're Looking for Work

There are a few questions you should ask yourself before you start searching for employment:

- Is there child care available while you are at work?
- Is transportation to work available and affordable?
- How much income do you need to pay your ongoing expenses?
- Are there any support groups or organizations for Aboriginal women in your community?

How to Search for a Job

Now that you have decided on the type of job that is best for you, you are ready to begin your job search.

There are many places where you can get information on job openings.

- Read the help wanted ads in your newspaper. But remember that only 15% of the available jobs are advertised there. Most jobs are found by talking to people - friends, family, employers and others.
- Check out the job boards at the Canada Employment Centre and Native organizations.
- Talk with someone at the personnel or human resources department of the companies you would like to work for.
- Call the organizations in your area that employers use to find workers. (See "Resources" Section)
- Talk to your friends, relatives and neighbors. Let everyone know that you are looking for a job.
- Visit the job placement offices at your local college or university.
- Ask your teachers if they know about any job openings.

Writing a Resume

When you know which job you want to apply for, you should prepare a resume. A resume is a summary of your qualifications and experience. It is more polished than an application and allows you to decide what is most important for an employer to know about you.

Employers will form their first impression of you based on your resume. Be sure to include a letter with your resume that is addressed to the employer and that mentions the job you are applying for.

You can get help to write a good resume. Books and brochures are available at the Canada Employment Centre, libraries, book stores and schools.

The Job Interview

A job interview gives you and the employer the opportunity to get to know each other, and shows the employer that you are the best person for the job.

It's important to prepare for the interview. You can express your interest in preparing for the interview, and ask the organization to send you an annual report or other material you can read ahead of time.

There are some things that you should expect. You may be asked to take a written or practical test. There may be more than one interviewer. You may be asked the following questions:

- What experience do you have for this job?
- What do you know about this company?
- Why do you want this job?
- Why should this company hire you? How will it benefit?
- Are you prepared to relocate?
- Is your time flexible? Can you work overtime if required?

There are some questions that an interviewer cannot ask you. These are questions like: How old are you? Are you married? How many children do you have? What is your religion? What is your sexual orientation? You can read the pamphlet, "Human Rights in Employment", to learn about your rights in this area. Contact your local Ontario Human Rights Commission office (see "Resources" Section) for this pamphlet.

You should present a positive image of yourself during the interview. You should dress appropriately, be on time, answer the questions confidently, and observe interview etiquette such as not smoking.

There are many books and brochures on interviews. Practise interviews with a friend, family member, or counsellor, and ask them for ways to improve your answers.

Job Discrimination

You may have to deal with two different types of discrimination when you are looking for a job.

One type is not designed to discriminate against Aboriginal women in particular, but could still keep you from getting a job. This is called "systemic discrimination." Employers treat everyone the same, but the result is different. For example, you may be told you need grade 12, plus two years experience, to get a job as a copy-typist. Many Aboriginal women, because of geographical barriers in some parts of the province, have not completed grade 12. Many find that their work experience is limited to short periods of employment, because employment is seasonal or the economy in their area is such that employers frequently lay off many of their employees. So, like some Aboriginal women, you may find that you could do the job but are prevented from obtaining it because of these "systemic" barriers.

This is only one example of many workplace policies and practices which are actually "systemic" barriers. Although such policies appear to be fair, they may prevent you from getting the job you want. You may choose to talk to a company with such policies and ask them to identify what specific skills they are looking for. In conversations with the company or in a covering letter with your resume or application, you can then describe how your skills qualify you for the job.

The second type of discrimination is designed to keep Aboriginal women from getting jobs. This is where employers will not hire you because of your sex or race.

If you think that either of these types of discrimination has kept you from getting a job, you should call your closest Ontario Human Rights Commission office (see "Resources" Section) or talk to someone at a legal clinic. Discrimination is against the law.

The Job:
Your Responsibilities

Congratulations! Now that you've got the job you wanted, you are in a great position to make your career grow. Many of the women profiled earlier learned new things and took on new responsibilities in their job. These led to promotions and new career opportunities.

Here are some things to keep in mind to make sure your new job helps you reach your career goals.

- Know your starting time and when to go for coffee breaks and lunch.
- Represent the company positively. How you act affects what others think of your company. Dress appropriately for your job.
- Initiative is the key to success in every job. Volunteer! Participate!
- Ask your employer to rate your job performance and to suggest ways of improving it. Constructive criticism is important. Use it to improve your performance.
- Take advantage of the training opportunities available in the workplace. Look for outside training if none is available where you work. Our "Resources" Section may be of assistance.
- Discuss any days you have to take off with your employer. There are times when extended family and community obligations require you to take time off work.
- Try to miss as little work as possible.

Support systems

Support services can help you learn new skills and build your career. Large companies may provide a greater variety of formal support services. Some examples of these support services are:

- Training Courses
- Career Counselling
- Professional and career guidance from a senior employee
- Unions/Professional Affiliations
- Employment Equity Consultant

Smaller companies may not have these supports. Talk to your employer to see if they support outside training. The company may agree to pay for tuition and your time off.

Whether you work for a large or small company, you can use the following kinds of informal support structures:

- Co-workers
- Networking
- Family/friends
- "Buddy" system
- Community-based resources
- Aboriginal organizations or agencies, e.g., friendship centres

Discrimination and harassment on the job

You may be discriminated against or harassed on the job. You should know your employer's policies on discrimination and sexual harassment, and your rights under the Human Rights Code.

The Human Rights Code states that every person has the right to be free from discrimination and harassment by the employer, an employer's agent or by a co-worker.

Harassment is any unwelcome comment or conduct. The Code also prohibits harassment of a sexual nature. Examples of sexual harassment are embarrassing sexual remarks, propositions or physical contact.

The Ontario Human Rights Code makes it illegal to discriminate on the basis of an employee's race, nationality, religion or sex.

If you experience harassment or discrimination on the job, there are people you can go to for help. These include your supervisor or company owner, a Union official, or, in larger organizations, the Employment Equity Coordinator or Human Resources Director. You can contact your local Ontario Human Rights office if you do not know what to do about a problem in your workplace (see "Resources" Section).

Remember the women profiled in this publication. Keep trying until you reach your goals!

TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS

Aboriginal women in Ontario come from many different backgrounds and regions, from remote northern fly-in communities to the major metropolitan centres in the south. The backgrounds of Aboriginal women are diverse. An awareness of this diversity can help you successfully recruit, hire and retain Aboriginal women.

As with the women profiled earlier, your company will benefit from the skills and talents of Aboriginal women.

Tearing Down Barriers

Aboriginal women face a number of barriers as they look for meaningful employment. These barriers also keep you from enjoying the benefits that Aboriginal women can bring to the workplace.

There may be two different types of barriers in your workplace: systemic discrimination and overt, intentional discrimination.

In the first type of discrimination, systemic barriers are usually embedded in and condoned by long-standing, and often written, policies or practices. They typically discriminate unintentionally. Although these policies and practices appear to be fair and are universally applied, they tend to disproportionately screen out members of the designated groups from employment or promotion opportunities.

Systemic discrimination is a policy or practice which operates to exclude for reasons that are not job-related. It need not be overt prejudice or discrimination. People are not treated differently. Instead, they are treated "the same" but the results are different. Thus, systemic discrimination is measured by impact or results and not by intent.

Some examples of systemic discrimination which can result in the screening out of Aboriginal women include:

- credentialism — Grade 12 for a clerical assistant;
- lengthy experience requirements (Aboriginal people may work in areas which are subject to frequent layoffs);
- unnecessary physical requirements — height and weight requirements (might screen out women who are smaller in stature but who are capable of doing the job);
- testing which has a cultural or gender bias built into it.

Additional barriers which Aboriginal women face during the employment process appear on page 21. You can see that there are a variety of ways in which Aboriginal women, who are qualified for jobs, and capable of doing them, may be prevented from acquiring and remaining in good jobs.

The second type of discrimination is designed to keep Aboriginal women from getting jobs. This is where Aboriginal women are deliberately not hired because of their sex or race.

Many Aboriginal women, besides the ones we have profiled, have overcome the barriers and established distinguished careers. However, society continues to present Aboriginal women as an underqualified group. Until their accomplishments are recognized and barriers acknowledged, the barriers will continue to exist.

Employment Equity

You probably have heard the term employment equity but may not fully understand its benefits. Employment equity ensures equal employment opportunities for all cultural and racial groups in hiring, promotion and training. This does not mean that you will have to hire unqualified people. It does mean, however, that you examine your hiring practices and working conditions and remove any barriers.

Today, initiatives such as employment equity are helping to reduce the barriers which keep qualified Aboriginal women from achieving their potential.

Legislation already exists for many federally regulated employers and federal contractors. Since legislation is likely to occur in Ontario, you should prepare for this by having an employment equity system in place.

Is Your Company Committed?

More and more companies are recognizing that it makes good business sense to have a diverse work force.

Your commitment to employment equity will succeed only when senior management supports it. This support comes in various forms. It can be written into a company's strategic plans, human resources policy manuals and employment equity policies. It can also be communicated verbally. Both approaches are necessary for good employment equity planning. A clear message to all employees is essential as part of all approaches.

COMMITMENT CHECKLIST

Here is a checklist to judge your level of commitment to employment equity.

- ☐ Do you have a corporate policy statement on employment equity?
- ☐ Has senior management made it clear to all employees that the organization is committed to increasing the number of Aboriginal people in the workplace?
- ☐ Does the organization's operational plan include stated numerical goals and timelines for the hiring and promotion of Aboriginal people? Are the plans managed by senior executives and linked to their performance appraisals?
- ☐ Have you committed the resources that are needed to promote employment equity, i.e., the necessary human and financial resources?
- ☐ Do you have a plan for training Aboriginal people?
- ☐ Do you know your local community resources? See the "Resources" Section.
- ☐ Have you educated your employees on the benefits of employment equity?

Recruitment

Traditional methods of recruiting can act as a barrier for Aboriginal women. Help wanted advertisements in the mainstream newspapers may not necessarily attract Aboriginal women. It may be more effective to advertise through Aboriginal newspapers/media. You should also contact organizations that train Aboriginal women or who assist them to find jobs. Contacting private employment agencies, or university and community college placement offices, is another means of recruiting. (See our "Resources" Section).

Outreach

Here are some questions to help you assess your outreach program.

- Do your job descriptions clearly describe the job openings? Are your job requirements realistic?
- Does your advertisement clearly describe the job opening? This includes the necessary qualifications and experience, salary range and closing date for all applications. Does it state that you are an equal opportunity employer? Do you have information packages available for prospective employees?
- Have you developed an outreach strategy? By using resource lists, such as the one contained in this publication, you can define the type and extent of outreach needed.
- What are your networking limitations? You will find the majority of Aboriginal organizations limited in their abilities to meet or advertise your employment needs. Their outreach may be limited to job boards and/or newsletters.
- Have you established a suitable budget?
- Does the outreach reflect the type of position?
- Have you allowed for adequate response time using Aboriginal newspapers published monthly or bi-monthly?

The extent of your outreach will be determined by budgetary limitations. The geographic area for outreach should be defined by your ability to pay interview travel costs for all suitable candidates.

Interview Process

The hiring team must agree on what skills and qualities the best candidate will possess. Interview questions must cover these areas.

Have you asked yourself the following questions?

- Are my questions clear? Are my questions relevant to the position?
- Do they comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code? (Refer to "Human Rights in Employment" pamphlet, available from the Ontario Human Rights Commission.)

The hiring team must be sensitive to the candidate's background. For example, some Aboriginal women may be less comfortable talking about their achievements, and it may be necessary to probe. They may feel that maintaining eye contact is considered rude.

A sensitive interview will help employers to hire based on job-appropriate skills rather than on "gut reaction" and a desire for racial "sameness." Training in cultural and racial awareness educates supervisors, managers and personnel staff to the cultural differences of Aboriginal women. An interview team that is diverse culturally, racially and by gender, contributes to both an understanding of other cultures and to the company's image as an employment equity employer.

Retaining Good Employees

Good employees are a valuable asset. Keeping them is good for both the company and the employee. A positive work environment can help. As well, training opportunities, awareness of cultural diversity, and opportunities to participate in decision making will help employees develop their skills and talents. There may be people who already work for you who you can train to take on new responsibilities. Aboriginal women, like the ones profiled here, can make significant contributions to your company. In the end, everybody wins.

SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYERS...

- Match the candidate to the appropriate job.
- Maximize opportunities for training.
- Allow employees time to adjust and develop.
- Monitor their on-the-job performance.
- Offer career counselling as needed.
- Encourage advancement based on merit.
- Make sure that their workforce reflects the cultural and racial mix of their community.
- Realize the benefits of employment equity. Barriers can prevent the hiring of capable individuals like those profiled in this publication.
- Develop the best policies to manage a diverse workforce. This results in lower staff turnover and better morale.
- Recognize that qualified Aboriginal candidates exist.
- Work with the Aboriginal community to find good candidates for jobs. Our "Resources" section may be helpful.

RESOURCES

The resource section identifies programs and services specific to Aboriginal people and for Aboriginal women. Employers will find this listing useful for contracting recruiting services or developing recruitment networks for their employment strategies. Aboriginal women will find the section helpful in identifying training and employment opportunities and related support services.

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EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLING AND PLACEMENT RESOURCES

NATIVE EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLORS, CANADA EMPLOYMENT CENTRES: EMPLOYMENT & IMMIGRATION CANADA

How It Works:
Counsellors specializing in assisting Aboriginal people in accessing CEIC Programs and Services

How to Use It:
Employers: Recruiting source
Aboriginal Women: Source of employment and support services

Contact:
Native Employment Counsellors in the following offices:

Northern District:

Timmins	(705) 267-6271
Dryden	(807) 223-2331
Elliot Lake	(705) 848-2231
Kirkland Lake	(705) 567-9205
Sault Ste. Marie	(705) 254-5101
Espanola	(705) 869-4552
Thunder Bay S.	(807) 623-2731
Thunder Bay N.	(807) 344-6601
Sudbury	(705) 671-4200
Hearst	(705) 362-4207
North Bay	(705) 472-3700
Kenora	(807) 468-3301
Geraldton	(807) 854-0902
Fort Frances	(807) 274-5307
Moosonee	(705) 336-2278
Thunder Bay (ONWA)	(807) 345-9821

Eastern District:

Cornwall	(613) 938-5731
Peterborough	(705) 745-0551
Belleville	(613) 969-3350
Ottawa Centre	(613) 990-5100
Napanee	(613) 354-3367

Southern District:

Windsor	(519) 254-1611
London	(519) 645-4088
Brantford	(519) 756-6101
Sarnia	(519) 332-0057
Wallaceburg	(519) 627-3348
Owen Sound	(519) 376-4280

Toronto District:

Women's Employment Centre	(416) 973-6625
Toronto East	(416) 461-3511
Dufferin	(416) 654-1745

TARGET GROUP SERVICES: EMPLOYMENT & IMMIGRATION CANADA

How It Works:
Ensures that Aboriginal women have equality of access to the full range of CEIC Programs and Services

How to Use It:
Employers: Promotion source
Aboriginal Women: Ensures their full participation in CEIC programs and services

Contact:
North York (416) 224-3641

O. I. PERSONNEL SERVICES LTD.

How It Works:
A private sector recruiting firm specializing in the permanent placement of Aboriginal people. Licensed by the Ministry of Labour and a member of the Association of Professional Placement Agencies and Consultants. Competitive fee structure and three-month guarantee of placements.

How to Use It:
Employers: Full - service recruitment
Aboriginal Women: Employment source

Contact:

Toronto	(416) 591-6995
Brantford	(519) 752-2230

OFFICE OF NATIVE EMPLOYMENT: PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

How It Works:
Recruits Aboriginal people for federal government departments and provides counselling for Aboriginal people interested in a career in federal civil service.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Source of employment and career counselling for the federal government

Contact:
Toronto (416) 973-5657
Toll Free No.: 1-800-387-0776

TRAINING PROGRAMS
ABORIGINAL SPECIFIC

ANIGAWNCIGIG INSTITUTE OF PETERBOROUGH

How It Works:
Offers varied Native-focussed and culturally sensitive training programs in management and community services, including cross-cultural training. For example, the Native Economic Development and Small Business Management course is a 44-week, full-time program designed to train Native participants to develop skills in economic development and small business management. Training allowances provided by Employment & Immigration Canada. Affiliated with Trent University and Sir Sandford Fleming College.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates; training of Aboriginal staff; cross-cultural training in the workplace
Aboriginal Women: Skills development and employment source

Contact:
Peterborough (705) 748-1780

ANOKEEWIN - KENOMADEE GAMIK TRAINING CENTRE

How It Works:
Office skills training for Aboriginal people

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Skills development

Contact:
Sioux Lookout (807) 737-2830

BIG TROUT LAKE TRAINING PROJECT

How It Works:
Computer and management training for Aboriginal people

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Skills development

Contact:
Big Trout Lake (807) 537-2534

KEY NORTH

How It Works:
A program to enable Aboriginal women to obtain secretarial/reception/computer skills. The program varies in length with a maximum of up to ten (10) months. Selection criteria are targeted to Aboriginal women in Sudbury and surrounding areas who experience barriers in entering the workforce. A minimum of Grade 10 applies. Participants receive a training allowance.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Skill development, potential link with employers for graduates

Contact:
Sudbury (705) 674-1074

EDUCON CARPENTRY ADULT TRAINING CENTRE

How It Works:
A 40-week, full-time general carpentry training course offered to individuals on social assistance, including Aboriginal people, experiencing barriers in securing and maintaining employment. A training allowance is provided through CEIC. The program offers work placements.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Skills development in non-traditional work

Contact:
Buckhorn (705) 657-9303

FIRST NATIONS TECHNICAL INSTITUTE

How It Works:
Offers diploma programs for status Indians in Child and Family Services, Welfare Administration, Office Automation and Aviation, and Certificate Courses in Computer Programs. The entrance requirements vary with the program. For example, the Aerospace Technology Program requires Grade 12 mathematics and physics and an Ontario Secondary School Diploma. Tuition and related expenses apply.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Skills development

Contact:
Deseronto (613) 396-2122

THE NATIVE SKILLS CENTRE

How It Works:
The Centre offers Aboriginal people a 26-week, full-time training program in computer applications and life skills, with an eight week work placement. Graduates receive a Microcomputer Clerk Certificate, certified by George Brown College. Selection criteria is based upon CEIC's Job Entry Program. Participants receive a training allowance.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Skill development, potential link with employers for graduates

Contact:
Toronto (416) 581-1392

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN

How It Works:
A 28-week, full-time training job readiness program for women with little or no work experience. The program offers on-the-job training, as well as classroom instruction to women in the Kenora catchment area. Participants receive a training allowance.

How to Use It:
Employers: Source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Skills development

Contact:
Kenora (807) 468-7737

NOKEE KWE

How It Works:
This organization administers two programs. The first, Shkimaajtaawind Program is a job readiness program for Aboriginal women. The program consists of a 13-week life skills program, educational upgrading and a six to eight week work placement. Training allowance applies. The second, the literary initiatives project, uses the learner-centred approach to learning. Training allowance applies.

How to Use It:
Employer: Source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Skills Development

Contact:
London (519) 667-7088

TRAINING PROGRAMS
NON - TRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS

APPRENTICESHIP/INDUSTRIAL TRAINING
MINISTRY OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

How It Works:
Apprenticeship is a combination of about 90 percent on-the-job training and 10 percent in-school study for 66 regulated skilled occupations. Duration is 2-5 years depending on the trade. Employers must provide an approved training program. Ministry's training consultants register apprentices as well as consult with employers regarding training needs. Participants must be 16 years of age or over, with Grade 10 or equivalent; some employers however request Grade 12. Training allowance applies.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Skills development and employment source

Contact:
The apprenticeship office near you or call the toll free Training Hotline at 1-800-387-5656

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM
MINISTRY OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
ONTARIO WOMEN'S DIRECTORATE

How It works:
Locally-based projects have been established throughout the province to increase the number of women in non-traditional apprenticeships. The projects locate and inform women interested in skilled occupations; match apprentices with interested employers and unions; and provide outreach activities to change attitudes and eliminate barriers to female participation in apprenticeship.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal women: Assistance in entering apprenticeships

Contact:
The Access to Apprenticeship office in your area can be found by calling the toll free Training Hotline at 1-800-387-5656

NORTHERN ONTARIO RELOCATION PROGRAM

How It Works:
Through the Equity in Apprenticeship initiative, the Government of Ontario is encouraging the hiring of women and Aboriginal people as apprentices in the construction of six new government buildings in Thunder Bay, Sudbury, North Bay and Sault Ste. Marie. Standard eligibility apprenticeship criteria apply. The apprentices are paid.

How to Use It:
Employers: Source of potential Aboriginal apprentices
Aboriginal Women: Skills development

Contact:
Toronto (416) 327-2585

WOMEN IN TRADES AND TECHNOLOGY (WITT)

How It Works:
An 18-week course offered at various community colleges for women interested in obtaining basic skills and orientation for technical and trades employment.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal trainees
Aboriginal Women: Career orientation and counselling

Contact:
Call your local community college to find out about the availability of these coures.

INTRODUCTION TO NON-TRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS

How It Works:
An eight-week course offered at Community Colleges for women interested in an orientation to non-traditional jobs, including on-the-job placements and handling small tools.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal trainees
Aboriginal Women: Career orientation and counselling

Contact:
Call your local community college to find out about the availability of these courses.

TRAINING PROGRAMS
GENERAL

LOCAL CAREER - PLANNING PROGRAMS

How It Works:
A service for women in the community, offering workshops in career planning and job search techniques, educational counselling and job placement services. They also offer occupational resource libraries.

How to Use It:
Employers: Register as job placement sites
Aboriginal Women: Employment counselling and job search support

Contact:

Toronto-Times Change	(416) 487-2807
Ottawa-Women's Career Counselling Service	(613) 232-4273
London—Woman Power	(519) 438-1782

WOMEN ENTERPRISE SKILLS TRAINING

How It Works:
A training program for Visible Minority Women in the Windsor area offering computer applications and general office skills.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Skills development

Contact:
Windsor (519) 256-6621

JOB ENTRY PROGRAM, CANADIAN JOB STRATEGY: EMPLOYMENT & IMMIGRATION CANADA

How It Works:
This program assists women to make the transition into the labor force through on-and off-site training. Targeted for women and youth who have difficulty entering the labor force. Training and supplementary allowances apply.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source for Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Employment counselling, training and placement

Contact:
Ottawa (613) 953-1827

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR ADULTS AND YOUTH: MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICES

How It Works:
Offers wide range of employment programs assisting individuals on social assistance to make the transition to employability. Services offered include assessment; vocational and other supportive counselling; referral to pre-employment, training, upgrading, jobs; purchased pre-employment life skills; day care and employment related expenses.

The following are some of the programs offered:

Employment Support Initiatives (ESI):
pre-employment counselling service for single parents receiving family benefits (FBA) or general welfare (GWA); includes counselling and employment-related expenses and child care;

Youth Employment Program (YEP):
pre-employment counselling service for youth aged 16-24 who have been receiving GWA for three months or more; includes counselling and employment-related expenses;

Social Service Employment Program (SSEP):
up to 12 months of full-time employment in agencies for job-ready clients at entry-level positions; for single parents on family benefits (FBA) or general welfare (GWA), or disabled persons on GWA;

Municipal Employment Program (MEP):
pre-employment service for employable social assistance recipients over 25 years of age; includes counselling, financial assistance with job search, training related expenses and child care;

Part-Time Employment Experience:
part-time employment during school year in non-profit community agencies for 16-20 year old dependents of individuals on general welfare (GWA) or family benefits (FBA).

How to Use It:
Employers: Source of potential Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Employment counselling, training, job placement

Contact:
For further information on programs and services, contact your:

Municipal Welfare Office
Provincial Income Maintenance Office
Provincial Vocational Rehabilitation Services Office

FOCUS ON CHANGE: YWCA OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO

How It Works:
A pre-employment bridging program for sole support mothers on social assistance; program includes academic upgrading and life skills; vocational counselling helps women set and plan for employment goals; operates from June to September, Monday to Thursday; on-site child care for pre-schoolers and TTC fare provided; available in Toronto, Scarborough, Etobicoke and North York.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Vocational counselling; academic upgrading; preparation for employment, skill training, apprenticeship or on-the-job training

Contact:
Toronto (416) 961-8100

OPPORTUNITY FOR ADVANCEMENT

How It Works:
A free seven-week program (2 group sessions weekly) for sole support mothers on social assistance; helps the women build confidence and explore and set educational/employment goals; free child care and TTC tickets. Follow-up supportive counselling provided. Programs offered in Toronto, York and Scarborough.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Vocational counselling, peer support group, follow-up supportive counselling

Contact:
Toronto (416) 787-1500

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

COLLEGES OF APPLIED ARTS & TECHNOLOGY

How It Works:
Colleges offer a wide variety of full-time and part-time courses of interest to Aboriginal women. Course content may include Native-specific programs in addition to the broad spectrum of areas such as Continuing Education, Adult Training, Skills Training, Apprenticeships, Client Services and Community Outreach. Some Colleges provide Native Student Services and/or have a Native Studies Department.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates; training resources may include Aboriginal specific areas.
Aboriginal Women: Career counselling, skills development, placement and other related support services

Contact:
Call the general numbers listed below:

* **These colleges provide Native Student Services and/or have a Native Studies Department.**

Algonquin College Ottawa	(613) 727-9400
* Cambrian College Sudbury	(705) 566-8101
* Canadore College North Bay	(705) 474-7600
Centennial College Scarborough	(416) 694-3241
Conestoga College Kitchener	(519) 653-2511
* Confederation College Thunder Bay	(807) 475-6110
Durham College Oshawa	(416) 576-0210
Fanshawe College London	(519) 452-4100
George Brown College Toronto	(416) 867-2270
* Georgian College Barrie	(705) 728-1951
Humber College Toronto	(416) 675-3111
Lambton College Sarnia	(519) 542-7751
* Loyalist College Belleville	(613) 962-9501
* Mohawk College Hamilton	(416) 575-1212
Niagara College Welland	(416) 735-2211
* Northern College South Porcupine (Timmins)	(705) 235-3211
St. Clair College Windsor	(519) 966-1656
St. Lawrence College Brockville	(613) 345-0660
* Sault College Sault Ste. Marie	(705) 759-6774
Seneca College North York	(416) 491-5050
Sheridan College Oakville	(416) 845-9430
* Sir Sandford Fleming College Peterborough	(705) 743-5610

UNIVERSITIES

How They Work:
Universities offer a wide range of courses, degrees, certificates and diplomas which can meet the educational and training needs of Aboriginal women. Many universities offer degrees in Native Studies. Some offer courses which are Native specific. Some universities provide Native Student Services and/or have a Native Studies Department.

How to Use Them:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates; training resources may include Aboriginal-specific areas
Aboriginal Women: Professional development and training, career counselling, placement and other related support services

Contact: Call the general numbers listed below:

* **These universities provide Native Student Services and/or have a Native Studies Department.**

* Algoma College (affiliated with Laurentian)
Sault Ste. Marie (705) 949-2301

* Brock University
St. Catharines (416) 688-5550

Carleton University
Ottawa (613) 824-4120

* Lakehead University
Thunder Bay (807) 343-8110

* Laurentian University
Sudbury (705) 675-1151

* McMaster University
Hamilton (416) 525-9140

* Nipissing College (affiliated with Laurentian)
North Bay (705) 474-3450

Ontario College of Art
Toronto (416) 977-5311

University of Ottawa
Ottawa (613) 564-2262

Queen's University
Kingston (613) 545-2218

Ryerson Polytechnical Institute
Toronto (416) 979-5000

* University of Toronto
Toronto (416) 978-2771

* Trent University
Peterborough (705) 748-1215

University of Waterloo
Waterloo (519) 885-1211

University of Western Ontario
London (519) 679-2111

Wilfred Laurier University
Waterloo (519) 884-1970

University of Windsor
Windsor (519) 253-4232

* York University
North York (416) 736-5000

INDEPENDENT LEARNING CENTRE

How It Works:
An educational facility providing a free home-study program consisting of 160 secondary school credit courses for Ontario residents who wish to earn high school diploma credits, upgrade basic skills or pursue special interests. It offers telephone tutoring service; career planning services also available.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Upgrade academic skills

Contact:
Toll Free 1-800-268-7065
From 807 Area Code - 0 + Zenith 65030
Toronto (416) 965-2657

INDIAN AND NORTHERN AFFAIRS CANADA: ONTARIO REGIONAL OFFICE

How It Works:
This federal government department administers the Indian Act, the exercising of federal obligations towards Status Indians. Of particular interest to Status Aboriginal women is the post-secondary educational assistance program and related counselling services. For eligibility criteria and other information, contact the nearest office listed below.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Post-secondary school financial support and counselling

Contact:
Regional Office:
Toronto (416) 973-1268

Education Counsellors:

Sudbury	(705) 522-5100
Thunder Bay	(807) 623-8115
Brantford	(519) 754-0323
Sioux Lookout	(807) 737-2800
Ohsweken	(519) 445-2219
Toronto	(416) 973-8441

ONTARIO NATIVE EDUCATION COUNSELLING ASSOCIATION (ONECA)

How It Works:
An association of Aboriginal-controlled post-secondary counselling units providing support services to Aboriginal students. All students approved for post-secondary education allowance are automatically serviced by these units provided that they attend school in their catchment areas. They also provide education liaison service to the related First Nation. For the Counselling Unit in your area, contact the number below.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Personal and career counselling; administration of the post-secondary financial assistance program

Contact:
Toronto (416) 360-5956

ONTARIO NATIVE LITERACY COALITION

How It Works:
Coordinating body for the Native managed and controlled community-based literacy programs which teach basic reading and writing skills on a one-to-one basis; there are over thirty (30) programs throughout Ontario. For the literacy program nearest you, contact the number below.

How to Use It:
Employers: Job boards
Aboriginal Women: Skills development

Contact:
Owen Sound (519) 371-5594

ONTARIO STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (OSAP)

How It Works:
A program to provide post-secondary students with financial assistance in the form of grants, loans, and/or bursaries. It is available for both part-time and full-time students who meet the eligibility criteria and who are enrolled at approved post-secondary institutions in Ontario. Minimum length of study is at least four weeks.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Financial assistance for post-secondary training and education

Contact:
Thunder Bay (807) 343-7260
Toll Free 1-800-465-3013

ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

CANADIAN ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (CAEDS):

How It Works:
This is an Aboriginal business development program which provides assistance for modernizing, expanding or developing Aboriginal businesses. It is primarily for larger businesses but does have a small business component.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Skills development; financial assistance

Contact:
Toronto (416) 973-6987

FEDERAL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT BANK (FBDB)

How It Works:
The Bank is a public institution serving financial and management needs of small-and mid-sized businesses. The Bank offers financing for projects at competitive interest rates, as well as limited venture capital. In addition, it provides a wide range of services, such as counselling, training and business management.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Can receive financial and management consultation services, and financial assistance for business development

Contact:
Toronto (416) 973-1144

FIRST PEOPLES FUND

How It Works:
A private sector initiative to assist Aboriginal communities in establishing and operating micro-enterprise loan funds. The goal is to provide access to affordable and dependable sources of credit for people whose businesses lack acceptable collateral and are considered too small for regular bank loans. Particularly targeted to low-income individuals and Aboriginal women.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Financial assistance; peer support group

Contact:
Toronto (416) 360-1708

NISHNAWBE ASKI DEVELOPMENT FUND

How It Works:
An Aboriginal-controlled financial institution which provides assistance to Aboriginal entrepreneurs in Northern Ontario. Financial assistance and related support services are available based on eligibility criteria.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Financial assistance for business development

Contact:
Thunder Bay (807) 623-5397

ONTARIO METIS AND ABORIGINAL ASSOCIATION DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (OMAA D.C.)

How It Works:
An Aboriginal-controlled financial institution which provides financial assistance and related support services to eligible Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Financial assistance for business development

Contact:

Sault Ste. Marie	(705) 949-5161
Toll-free (from area code 705)	1-800-461-5104
(from area codes 807, 814, 514)	1-800-461-0803
(from area codes 416, 613, 519)	1-800-461-5112

STEP UP - BUSINESS EXPANSION TRAINING FOR WOMEN MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY, TRADE AND TECHNOLOGY

How It Works:
A joint pilot program, sponsored by MITT and the Federal Business Development Bank (FBDB). Formal training workshops will be combined with matching participants with experienced women business owners.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Training and mentoring for women entrepreneurs, including Aboriginal women.

Contact:
Toronto (416) 973-1144

SUPPORT SERVICES

DAY CARE SERVICES: MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICES

How It Works:
Day care services may be available in your area and you may qualify for a subsidy to help with the cost. To locate a day care centre in your area, contact a community information centre, child care resource centre, your local Municipality or the regional office of the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

How to Use It:
Aboriginal Women: Day care services and possible financial assistance to help with the cost

Contact: Ministry of Community and Social Services

Northern Ontario Regional Office
Sault Ste. Marie (705) 949-8052
Central Ontario Regional Office
Toronto (416) 963-1010
Southeastern Ontario Regional Office
Kingston (613) 548-6761
Southern Ontario Regional Office
London (519) 438-8344

NATIVE WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE

How It Works:
A drop-in centre for Aboriginal women in Toronto providing counselling and support services, and literacy program; active in cultural activities.

How to Use It:
Employers: Job Board
Aboriginal Women: Counselling and support services

Contact: Toronto (416) 963-9963

CHIEFS OF ONTARIO

How It Works:
A political body composed of four (4) major Ontario Status Indian associations. The purpose is to enable the four Status associations to discuss and decide on regional, provincial and national priorities affecting First Nations in Ontario.

How to Use It:
Employers: Job board; source of mailing list for First Nations in Ontario
Aboriginal Women: Job postings; networking

Contact: Toronto (416) 596-0618

ONTARIO NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION (ONWA)

How It Works:
A provincial association which serves as a leadership development vehicle for Aboriginal women in Ontario. The primary objective is to represent the interests of Aboriginal women. It operates through over forty (40) locals throughout Ontario whose membership is Aboriginal women in the province.

How to Use It:
Employers: Job board; source of mailing list for ONWA Locals; newsletter
Aboriginal Women: Networking opportunities; newsletter

Contact:
Thunder Bay (807) 623-3442

ONTARIO METIS AND ABORIGINAL ASSOCIATION (OMAA)

How It Works:
A provincial association representing the interests of Metis and Aboriginal people in Ontario. It operates through over one hundred (100) locals throughout the province. Membership is open to all off-reserve Aboriginal people. OMAA is the co-sponsor of this publication.

How to Use It:
Employers: Job boards; bi-monthly newsmagazine; source of mailing list for OMAA locals
Aboriginal Women: Networking

Contact:
Sault Ste. Marie (705) 949-5161

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF INDIAN FRIENDSHIP CENTRES

How It Works:
An umbrella organization representing the majority of Indian Friendship Centres in Ontario. Friendship Centres, located in urban areas, provide cultural and social support services for Aboriginal people. The Federation is involved in research and policy initiatives related to employment of Aboriginal people. Currently involved in employment equity initiatives for Aboriginal people.

How to Use It:
Employers: Job boards; source of mailing list of friendship centres in Ontario
Aboriginal Women: Networking and support services (through friendship centres)

Contact:
Toronto (416) 484-1411

ADVOCACY SERVICES

ONTARIO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

How It Works:
The Commission administers and enforces the Ontario Human Rights Code which addresses issues affecting women in the workplace, i.e., sexual harassment and racial discrimination. Aboriginal women who feel they are being harassed or discriminated against in the workplace can contact one of the fifteen (15) offices located across Ontario.

How to Use It:
Employers: Information resources including legislation
Aboriginal Women: Information and enforcement of human rights related to discrimination and harassment

Contact:
Ontario Human Rights Commission offices:

Toronto	(416) 965-6845
Hamilton	(416) 521-7870
Kingston	(613) 545-4315
Kitchener	(519) 570-9622
Kenora	(807) 468-5568
London	(519) 438-0076
Ottawa	(613) 738-2836
Sault Ste. Marie	(705) 942-8417
St. Catharines	(416) 684-7406
Sudbury	(705) 675-4455
Thunder Bay	(807) 475-1691
Timmins	(705) 267-6231
Toronto Central	(416) 326-9511
Toronto East	(416) 750-3575
Toronto West	(416) 273-7811
Windsor	(519) 256-8277

ONTARIO WOMEN'S DIRECTORATE

How It Works:
The Ontario Women's Directorate is a central advocacy agency. Through policy development and program coordination, consultation, and public education, it works to enable the government to achieve the economic, legal, and social equality of women in Ontario. The Consultative Services Branch of the Directorate encourages planning, development and expansion of employment equity in Ontario workplaces. It offers seminars, technical guides and funding for projects through the Change Agent Program and Employment Equity Incentive Fund.

How to Use It:
Employers: The Change Agent Program funds employment equity demonstration projects with partners from the private sector. The Employment Equity Incentive Fund provides funds to public sector employers to implement equity programs.
Aboriginal Women: Information and advocacy

Contact: Toronto (416) 597-4500
Thunder Bay (807) 345-6084

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION: EMPLOYMENT EQUITY RESOURCES CENTRE

How It Works:
The Centre maintains information in the form of books, periodicals, reports, etc., on topics such as employment equity, job-sharing, assertiveness training, women in non-traditional occupations in the Federal Public Service, and women's issues as they relate to federal government initiatives.

How to Use It:
Employers: Information and resources
Aboriginal Women: Information and resources

Contact:
Ottawa (613) 996-0682

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION: WOMEN'S PROGRAM

How It Works:
Administers a training and apprenticeship program aimed at increasing the number of women in non-traditional occupations in the Federal Public Service; development and promotion of special training activities aimed at advancing career opportunities for women. Also included is analysis, monitoring and development of related issues.

How to Use It:
Employers: Potential source of Aboriginal candidates
Aboriginal Women: Skills development and training and employment opportunities in non-traditional occupations

Contact:
Ottawa (613) 992-9029

MULTICULTURAL WORKPLACE PROGRAMS
(TRAINING FOR EMPLOYERS)

ANIGAWNCIGIG INSTITUTE OF PETERBOROUGH

How It Works:
For information on this program, please refer to the Training Program - Aboriginal Specific section (page 32)

MULTICULTURAL WORKPLACE PROGRAMS (MWP)

How It Works:
These programs provide training and services designed for workers and managers in multi-racial, multicultural, multilingual employment settings. Workplace specific language training is delivered to employees for whom English is a second language. Intercultural training includes communication seminars, workforce diversity seminars, human rights and race relations training. Offered to private and public sector employers, non-profit organizations, municipalities, school boards and labor unions.

How to Use Them:
Employers: Multicultural support services and training

Contact:
Multicultural Workplace Programs Consultant
Toronto (416) 963-3715

ABORIGINAL MEDIA

ABORIGINAL MEDIA

How They Work:
Listed below are the major components of Aboriginal media in Ontario. They are an excellent source for outreach into Aboriginal communities. Advertising rates apply.

How to Use Them:
Employers: Advertising and outreach
Aboriginal Women: Employment opportunities

NAME: Wawatay Native Communications Society
ADDRESS: Box 1180, 16-5th Avenue
Sioux Lookout, Ontario P0V 2T0
TELEPHONE: (807) 737-2951
TYPE: Newspaper, Radio, TV
FREQUENCY: Semi-monthly tabloid
DISTRIBUTION: Northern Ontario
CIRCULATION: 3,000

NAME: Native Beat
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 1260
Forest, Ontario N0N 1J0
TELEPHONE: (519) 786-2142
TYPE: Newspaper
FREQUENCY: Monthly
DISTRIBUTION: Ontario
CIRCULATION: 5,000

NAME: Tekawannake Publications
ADDRESS: P.O. Box 130
Ohsweken, Ontario N0A 1M0
TELEPHONE: (519) 445-2238
TYPE: Newspaper
FREQUENCY: Weekly
DISTRIBUTION: Southern Ontario
CIRCULATION: 2,000

NAME: The Aboriginal Voice
ADDRESS: 158 Sackville Road
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario P6B 4T6
TELEPHONE: (705) 949-5161
TYPE: Newsmagazine
FREQUENCY: 6 times annually
DISTRIBUTION: Ontario
CIRCULATION: 2,000

NAME: Native Canadian
ADDRESS: Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
16 Spadina Road
Toronto, Ontario M5R 1S7
TELEPHONE: (416) 964-9087
TYPE: Newsmagazine
FREQUENCY: 6 times annually
DISTRIBUTION: Ontario (Toronto concentration)
CIRCULATION: 1,600

AUDIO VISUAL RESOURCES

Aboriginal Health Professions Program: You Can Do It!

(1988, Aboriginal Health Professions Programme, VHS, 15 minutes)

Presents health professions as a career choice for Aboriginal students and profiles Aboriginal people in medicine, dentistry, speech-language pathology. Also profiles a traditional Indian medicine person. Includes discussion with Aboriginal students going into the health professions and why they have made this career choice. Contact (416) 978-6993 for loan.

Attention: Women at Work!

(1983, National Film Board, 16 mm or VHS, 29 minutes)

This is a career counselling film featuring a discussion group with high school girls. It also profiles four career women in non-traditional work including an architect, a hovercraft pilot and two journeywomen. It's appropriate for high school students and for older women who want to return to the workforce. Contact the National Film Board, (416) 973-9110 for loan.

Doctor, Lawyer, Indian Chief

(1986, National Film Board, 16mm or VHS, 29 minutes)

Profiles five Aboriginal women from across Canada in different careers — a lawyer, a Chief, a Member of Parliament, a life skills teacher and a woman who works on a commercial fishing boat. The women discuss how they have taken control of their personal and work lives by drawing on cultural values and their own strengths. Appropriate for women and men of all ages including high school. Contact the National Film Board, (416) 973-9110 for loan.

Going Places

(1988, Canada Employment and Immigration Canada, VHS, 12 minutes)

Profiles Aboriginal people, including women in non-traditional work and a single mother, who have successfully reached their career goals. Appropriate for Native women of all ages. Contact the CEIC Regional Office, (416) 224-3641 for loan.

More Than Just A Job

(1990, Ontario Women's Directorate, VHS, 15 minutes)

This video is about women and men who have made career choices based on their personal interests and talents rather than on sex-role stereotyped ideas about what is "women's work" and "men's work." Contact L.M. Media Marketing Services Ltd. (416) 475-3750 for loan.

Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

(1988, Labour Canada Women's Bureau, VHS, 20 minutes)

The problem of sexual harassment is explored through a series of vignettes and interviews. These outline the rights of employees and the responsibilities of employers under the Canada Labour Code. The video gives information on prevention of sexual harassment and what to do when it happens. Appropriate for showing in the workplace, for women's groups and for women enrolled in training programs. Contact L.M. Media Marketing Services Ltd. (416) 475-3750 for loan.

Something to Talk About: An Employment Equity Video and Leaders Guide

(1989, Ontario Women's Directorate and Canada Packers Inc.)

Presents key employment equity issues and common misconceptions. Designed to stimulate discussion in the workplace and to encourage under- standing and support for employment equity. Contact L.M. Media Marketing Services Ltd. (416) 475-3750 for loan.

Yes, I Can

(1980, Ontario Ministry of Education/Colleges and Universities, 16 mm, 18 minutes)

Depicts five young women training for, and working in, the skilled trades. Appropriate for older women who are considering returning to the work force and for high school girls. Contact L.M. Media Marketing Services Ltd. (416) 475-3750 for loan.

PUBLICATIONS

Most of these publications are available from the Ontario Women's Directorate Publications Department, 480 University Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M5G 1V2, (416) 597-4605 (ENGLISH) and (416) 597-4596 (FRENCH).

Annotated Bibliography on Employment Equity

(1990, Ontario Women's Directorate)

A list and description of publications that deal primarily with employment equity in the private sector. These articles identify business outlines, concrete strategies and/or examine the benefits to employers who practise employment equity. Available from the Ontario Women's Directorate.

Directory Of Federal Government Programs And Services For Women

(1989, Status of Women Canada)

A complete list of various federal government programs and services for women. Included are programs and services in the areas of employment, training, business development, social services and health, human rights, the arts and support for voluntary organizations. Specific sections are dedicated to Native women. Contact the Communications Directorate at (613) 995-7835.

Economic Status of Native Women in Ontario

(1987, Report prepared by J. Phillip Nicholson, Policy & Management Consultants for the Ontario Women's Directorate)

Provides a demographic review of Native women in Ontario outlining current economic conditions and highlights major employment and economic barriers by Native women.

Employment Equity Award Winners Magazines

(1987, 1988, 1989)

These magazines profile employers who have received the Achievement in Employment Equity Award. Of particular interest are the 1988 and 1989 magazines which feature employers who have increased Aboriginal labor force participation. Available from the Ontario Women's Directorate.

Employment Equity for Visible Minority Women: A Guide for Employers

(1989, Ontario Women's Directorate and Urban Alliance on Race Relations)

The need for employment equity for Visible Minority women is discussed with practical ideas on recruitment and how to prepare the workplace with planning and implementation strategies.

Managing Employment Equity: Seven Part Series

(1988, Ontario Women's Directorate)

The series defines employment equity, examines management process, outlines and reviews select provincial and federal legislation which impacts on employment equity, gives practical examples and ideas from organizations with experience in employment equity and provides information on developing and implementing training plans.

Meeting the Challenge... Women in Sales

(1989, Ontario Women's Directorate)

Profiles women who are successfully selling in historically male-dominated fields including financial services, technical equipment and automobiles.

Native Communities and Organizations in Ontario: A Directory

(1987, Ministry of Citizenship, Native Community Branch)

Native communities and organizations are listed both geographically and thematically with addresses and telephone numbers; does not include descriptions. Available from Native Community Branch, Ministry of Citizenship, (416) 965-5003.

Native Women: A Statistical Overview

(1985, Social Trends Analysis Directorate, Department of the Secretary of State)

Report about the social and economic conditions of Canada's Native women in the 1980's, using data from the 1981 Census. Available from the Social Trends Analysis Directorate, (613) 994-1833.

Poster Series of Women in Non-Traditional Occupations

(1990, Ontario Women's Directorate)

A series of six full-color posters featuring a sampling of women, including an Aboriginal woman, in non-traditional, high growth occupations.

Profile

(1987, Ontario Ministry of Labour, Centre for Disability and Work)

Profiles of 34 people in a variety of careers who have overcome barriers and stereotypes facing people with disabilities. Among those profiled are women and Aboriginal persons. Available from the Ministry of Labour, (416) 326-7565.

Provincial And Regional Native Organizations In Ontario: A Brief Introduction

(1987, Ministry of Citizenship, Native Community Branch)

This publication describes the major Native organizations, their membership and the issues that they address. It also gives the location of each organization. Available from Ministry of Citizenship, Native Community Branch, (416) 965-5003.

Resource Reading List: Annotated Bibliography of Resources By And About Native People

(1987, compiled by Catherine Verrall, Canadian Alliance in Solidarity with the Native Peoples)

A comprehensive listing of print materials and audio-visual resources with brief descriptions and where they may be obtained. Available from Canadian Alliance in Solidarity with the Native Peoples, (416) 363-4272.

The Concrete Reserve: Corporate Programs for Indians in the Urban Work Place

(1983, Gail Grant, The Institute for Research on Public Policy)

Study of Native employment programs in the corporate sector that are designed to help Aboriginal people enter the Canadian labor force. Emphasis is on the Western provinces. Includes a chapter with suggestions for employers on how to implement employment equity for Aboriginal people. Contact the Institute for Research on Public Policy, 2149 MacKay Street, Montreal, Quebec, H3G 2J2.

This Job Requires...Bias-Free Recruitment and Selection

(1989, Ontario Women's Directorate and Computing Devices Company)

Training guide for implementing bias-free recruitment and selection policies and practices. Complete workshop kit for human resources staff and trainers.

Women Into Construction - A Blueprint For Action

1987, National Association of Women in Construction and Ontario Women's Directorate)

A handbook for women looking for employment and training in construction and for employers wanting to recruit women into the industry. It includes ideas for finding work and for recruitment. Appropriate methods for conducting interviews and preparing the work site are presented in a very practical way.

Work and Family: The Crucial Balance

(1990, Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services and the Ontario Women's Directorate)

This publication describes changes in families and in the workforce. It explores how companies and unions have implemented family-friendly workplace policies to balance the work family issue.

Glossary of Terms

Aboriginal Persons
Any person of North American Indian, Inuit or Metis ancestry.

Aboriginal Rights
Rights of Aboriginal people by virtue of being original inhabitants of the land.

Band
Body of Indians recognized by government for whose benefit and use land and money have been set aside by the government.

Bill C-31
An Act to Amend the Indian Act. It restores the Status and Band Membership of persons who lost their Indian Status and Band Membership because of sexual discrimination. Further, children of these persons are now eligible for Status within the meaning of the Indian Act. The Act also abolished the concept of enfranchisement, a process whereby an Indian person gave up Indian Status and Band Membership.

Chief
The political representative of a Band or First Nation community, elected by rules that are in the Indian Act.

First Nation
A term that encompasses all Aboriginal peoples. Many Status Indian communities prefer the term "First Nation" to the term "Band," or "reserve."

Indian
Person registered or entitled to be registered as an Indian according to the Indian Act, i.e., Status Indian.

Indian Act
An Act of the Parliament of Canada exercising its legislative jurisdiction for "Indians and Lands reserved for Indians" assigned in the B.N.A. Act, Section 91 (24).

Indian & Northern Affairs Canada
Federal Department exercising delegated duties, powers and functions of the Minister of Indian Affairs under the Indian Act and related Appropriation Acts.

Metis
A term used to indicate a person of mixed blood - a person of mixed Aboriginal and other ancestry.

Native
Canadians of Aboriginal descent can include Status and Non-Status Indians, Inuit and Metis.

Non-Status Indian
A person of Aboriginal ancestry who does not or has not yet met the legal criteria for recognition as an Indian under the federal Indian Act. Many non-Status persons have sought reinstatement under Bill C-31. While thousands have been reinstated, thousands more remain in the processing system.

Reserve
Tract of land set aside for the use and benefit of a Band, the legal title to which is vested in Her Majesty.